

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, Applicant cancels claims 33-35 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1, 3, 10-13, 18, 19, and 21-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,452,312; hereinafter "Yamamoto") in view of Sonoda (JP 10254001; hereinafter "Sonoda"). Claims 2-9, 16, 17, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sonoda in view of Yamamoto. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto in view of Sonoda as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Terahara (U.S. Patent No. 6,061,157; hereinafter "Terahara"). Claims 14, 33, 34 and 35 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rejection of Claims 1, 3, 10-13, 18, 19, 21-32 under § 103(a) over Yamamoto in view of Sonoda

Applicant submits claim 1 including the subject matter of allowable claim 35. Therefore, dependent claims 10-13, 18, 21-27, and 29-32 are allowable.

Applicant submits claims 3, 19 and 28 including the features of allowable claim 34.

Rejection of Claims 2-9, 16, 17, 20 under § 103(a) over Sonoda in view of Yamamoto

Applicant submits claim 2 to include the subject matter of allowable claim 33.

Applicant submits claim 3 to include the features of allowable claim 34.

Claim 4, which depends from claim 1, is patentable for at least the reasons submitted for claim 1.

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Claims 5-7, 9, and 20 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 34.

Claims 8, 16, and 17, which respectively depend from claims 7, 6, and 16, are patentable for at least the reasons submitted for their base claims.

Rejection of Claim 15 under § 103(a) over Yamamoto in view of Sonoda, and further in view of Terahara

Claim 15, which depends from claim 1, is allowable at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 1.

Lastly, allowable claim 14 which depends from claim 2, is rewritten in independent form and thus, is allowable.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.


Respectfully submitted,

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